



# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● MAY—JUNE 1997

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Church of South India - Golden Jubilee Celebrations  
**CSI PASTORS CONVENTION- 14th, 15th May 1997**  
Bishop Cotton Boys' School, Bangalore



A MEGA HISTORIC KINGDOM EVENT



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*Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I.*

THE SOUTH INDIA

## CHURCHMAN

*The Magazine of the Church of South India*

**MAY - JUNE, 1997**

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## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Late have I loved you, O beauty so ancient and so new; late have I loved you! For behold you were within me, and I outside; and I sought you outside and in my ugliness fell upon those lovely things that you have made. You were with me and I was not with you. I was kept from you by those things, yet had they not been in you, they would not have been at all. You called and cried to me and broke upon my deafness; and you sent forth your beam and shone upon me, and chased away my blindness; you breathed fragrance upon me, and I drew in my breath and do now pant for you; I tasted you and I now hunger and thirst for you; you touched me, and I now burn for your peace.

—St. Augustine of Hippo

A little boy visiting in the home of an elderly woman was intrigued by a coloured wall motto bearing the biblical text: 'Thou, God, seest me.' Noticing the child's interest, the kindly woman took the motto from the wall and began explaining it to the lad.

'Some people will tell you', she said, 'that God is always watching to see when you are doing wrong - so He can punish you. I don't want you to think of this motto in that way. Every time you read the words, 'Thou God, seest me,' I would rather have you remember that God loves you so much that he cannot take his eyes off you.'

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*Hon. Business Manager*



The count-down for the Golden Jubilee of our Church has started and it is only 75 days for the grand final celebrations of joy and thanksgiving for the grace of the Lord who has led this bold ecumenical venture of faith in history with his mighty hand and seen it through these tumultuous and glorious fifty years. It is also time for us to do some real soul-searching and introspection to thank him for the past, to take stock of the present and to venture forth into the future with a vision that is worthy of our calling filled with repentance for our sins of commission and omission in a spirit of reconciliation, 'expecting great things from God and attempting great things for God'. His Might, Power and Amazing Grace have sustained us so far and no doubt they will sustain us for all time to come.

\* \* \* \* \*

How many of our countrymen would have heard of Leelavathi? She was very much in the news recently most unfortunately through her death! How did she die? She did not die but was brutally murdered. Was she a criminal? If the newspaper reports are anything to go by she was responsible for the supply of drinking water to people in her constituency in Madurai Corporation and that seems to have been her crime and her undoing! Unbelievable, is it not? Villapuram had for long been dependent on water brought by Corporation tankers and sold to people for a fee levied by local thugs. All attempts to bring water had been thwarted in the past as selling water was fetching this 'mafia' a princely sum of Rs. 35,000/- a month. This lady in her election campaign had

promised her people that she would bring free water for them, if elected. That was the one point mission in which she succeeded and that was her undoing. It is immaterial what party she belonged to but an innocent human life has been violently snuffed out by goondas and thugs who were opposed to her politically. Her blood like Abel's is reaching upto heaven crying for justice! We solemnly affirm all human lives to be sacred, nay, sacrosanct and we are totally opposed to this culture of violence, bloodshed and murder.

### A VIEW FROM THE PEW

Just as this 'View from the Pew' goes to the press the front pages of all the newspapers are full of reports of violence and police firing in the southern districts of Tamilnadu brought about by caste animosities. It is unbelievable that people should work themselves up to such a frenzy to kill one another in the name of caste at the fag end of the 20th century! It has almost become a predictable, recurring phenomenon and it is sickening. Certainly we cannot expect solutions from the politicians who themselves are beneficiaries of such divisive stratagems and spoils. The answer lies in promoting sanity and letting the people see reason! How can this be done? All right thinking people should waste no time in translating B.R. Ambedkar's 'Annihilation of castes' in all regional languages and bring pressure upon the government to make it compulsory reading at the 10th standard level in all schools all over the country.

None can be immune to the power and spell cast by this ingenious treatise in terms of its inexorable logic, wisdom, good sense and common sense spelt out most clearly by the most brilliant legal luminary of our land. At least the next generation would grow up to be sane and sensible. After all the battle has to be fought and won in the minds of the people.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some called it a mega event, some said it was historic, and some others hailed it as a kingdom event. But by general consensus it was a mega, historic kingdom event when all the ordained ministers, both men and women, congregated at Bishop Cotton Boys School in Bangalore on May 14 & 15, 1997 at the Golden Jubilee All Pastors Convention of the CSI. A galaxy of the church leaders was there, The Most Rev. Dr. Vasant P. Dandin, the Moderator, The Rt. Rev. William Moses, the Deputy Moderator, Mr. Frederick William, Hon. Treasurer, CSI-Synod and more than ten Bishops of the various dioceses of the Church of South India and The Most Rev. Dr. Samir Kafity, the Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem who inspired the delegates with his eloquent spirit-filled messages delivered in stentorian voice that could reach even more than 200 metres! Bishop Samuel Amirtham in his key-note address set the tone for the convention. Excellent arrangements had been made by the host Karnataka Central Diocese and its youthful Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Vasanthakumar. It was indeed unprecedented in the annals of the Church of South India. (for more details see page 15, 17 to 19).



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In this year of the Golden Jubilee of our church we have envisaged a number of programmes to testify to the glorious name of our Resurrected Lord. This convention is the first of all those programmes to take place. Most beautiful and glorious is this gathering of all God's servants in South India, in particular of the church of South India, in one place! This is more than a convention, it is a celebration, it is our festival.

The New Testament refers to the three tier ministry as *Episcopos*, *presbyteros* and *diakonia*, of which presbyters have been central in this pattern of ministry, because they are the people closest to the community and this community depends upon their encouragement, support, comfort, counselling and fellowship and above all they are the ones who interpret the word of God to the people.

In this context, we are gathered here as the servants of God to renew our commitment, remember our call of God, revive our spiritual life and receive a fresh inspiration towards a meaningful ministry in the church, back home

### **The context of all presbyters convention**

Now, in the wider range of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the CSI, it is commendable that Pastoral Aid Department led by Rev. Dyvasirvadam, under the guidance of the Synod Ministerial committee, and with the generous help of Karnataka Central Diocese under its youthful bishop Vasanth

Kumar, is organizing an All presbyters convention, a tremendous effort and first of its kind in the history of the Church of South India, to bring together all of you who have been labouring in the vineyard of God in South India. New insights and new meaning of ministry through lectures, preaching, meditations and above all our participation in the body and blood of Jesus Christ, can happen through this *koinonia*, the fellowship.

### **Significance of the ministry of presbyters**

A great increase of responsibility of presbyters can be seen in the changing times of our nation. Today, a presbyter is not simply limited to preaching alone, but he is a facilitator of new thoughts, evoking new awareness in the minds of the people, a coordinator in the great fellowship of the congregation, the *Sabha*; a counsellor in the crises of personal, family and community life; a readily available guide; the *guru*, comforter and leader to face any kind of challenge that tries to thwart our faith.

As Moderator of this church I want to exhort you to recapture the vision of our forefathers who struggled to bind this church as one body. Let us not neglect evangelism, the proclamation of the 'Good News' that should continue to keep the church alive.

Today what we urgently need is the collective ministry. Presbyters of each area must form into small groups, to discuss and dialogue the issues and concerns not only of the church but also



of the wider community concerning our identity and life of faith in India where church is not a separate entity. These small groups must re-read the Word of God, seeing its relevance to our context and culture relating it to our situation. There has to be cooperation not only among the presbyters of CSI but a greater fellowship with other churches and groups. They need to be invited to a wider fellowship, which should be an open-ended one. Look at the enormous transformation of the communities of Latin America and Korea which used this method of Bible studies in 'groups, relating the re-read Word to their struggles.

India is undergoing a radical change with the introduction of new technology, computer and fast communication system. Presbyters need to learn, study and adapt to this new situation. One cannot stop this change. Ultimately our faith in Christ must be seen relevant and vibrant in situations of the changing world.

\*The Inaugural address given by the Most Reverend Moderator The Rt. Rev. Vasant P. Dandin at the CSI All Pastors Convention in Bangalore May 14, 1997.



The life of Jesus must become a continuing paradigm in our ministry to people. A closer look at the earthly life and the ministry of Jesus reveals an affirmation of life in this world. In his struggle and laying down his life on the Cross, he liberated men and women, children and the sick, mentally and physically disordered, systematized the thinking of the learned of his time and offered to them a life which can be celebrated and lived to the fullest extent. His ministry was prophetic, which pointed not only to the kingdom of God but also made a critical social analysis of his time. The 'Shalom community' that Jesus established, continues to be the vision of every presbyter who lives in the very life of people.

### Two-Fold Celebration

Today on the one hand while we celebrate the golden Jubilee, we also join the celebrations of jubilee of our Nation's Independence. The church is part of it in terms of our social, cultural and political life. Presbyters must carry this double faced celebration of our life in India as we go back to our congregations. We must initiate the double celebrations meaningfully in our context.

In a couple of years, the whole world will celebrate the new age. We are at the threshold of yet another millennium. We don't enter in it as dumb spectators or passive members but as servants of God, fully equipped with the new interpretation of the Word of God encouraging, renewing and reviving the life of yet another generation.

Dear presbyters of this great church, I greet you in this historic convention with all the warmth, in the glorious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, you are to continue a great tradition of our fathers and mothers who lived their faith in commitment and in obedience to the Lord. He is the God of our fathers, who is also God of our Lord Jesus Christ and who continues to be God of our generation.

Our ministry of liberation and our efforts of greater unity must evoke the people of God to celebrate it as a Jubilant festival not only with in our church but also in the wider society for the glory of God. Hence, **unite, liberate and celebrate!** To God be the Glory! Amen. ■

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# Rediscovering the Pastoral Ministry in the Church of South India\*

THE RT. REV. DR. M. AZARIAH

*Bishop in Madras*

## I. Introduction:

The role of the presbyter is widely recognized as having triple functions namely Priest, Prophet and Pastor. But the governing principles of the CSI constitution have recognized the presbyter as one among the threefold ministry in the Church of South India, namely that of *Deacon, Presbyter and Bishop*. These draw upon and hold together the different particular dominant emphasis from each of the uniting denominations of Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans.

A re-reading of the New Testament and the form and practice of ministry in the early church have clearly identified the threefold ministry and so became justified and acceptable for the different uniting denominations. In the history of the early Church, the churches founded by St. Paul seem to have been locally in the hands of presbyters or elders assisted by deacons (Read Acts 16:4, 20:17, 21:18, Phil. 1:1). Another name for presbyter seems to have been bishop. This is at any rate the natural infringe from Acts. 20:17-35 where St. Paul summons the presbyters of the church of the Ephesus to meet him at Mileteus and warns them 'to take heed of yourselves and the whole flocks over which the Holy Spirit appointed you as Bishops' (Please also read Titus

1:7-9 and II Cor. 11:28). In the above referred texts at least the threefold ministry is suggested with three different names of bishop presbyter and deacon. Even then the gender discrimination seemed to have been avoided with the inclusion of Phebe among the deacons. (Read Rom. 16:1). It is certainly significant and notable that this threefold form of ministry in the church as accepted by the CSI is commended and asked to be developed with all its potential for ministry both in the Church and the world by the Lima Document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (B.E.M) of the World Council of Churches, Geneva published in 1982. However, in an age of democracy with its emphasis on Peoples Rights and Privileges the inherent and apparent distance and gap between the priest and the people as well as the prophet and the people tended to clearly relegate the image and role of the presbyter as priest and prophet over against projecting the image of the presbyter essentially as the pastor. The pastor is accepted to be close to the people from and for whom he is called to serve and care for. He or she is chosen, trained and appointed to this ministry by the body of the people which is also the body of Christ, the Church (Rom. 12, I Cor. 12 and Eph. 4). Thus it is clear the role of the presbyter, first and foremost is to be the Pastor of his flock, the congregation of the faithful people of God, the body of believers in Christ and members of the Church. And in our case, the United Church of South India with each

composite congregation are not to be identified with any denomination but as part of the one body of believers in Christ located and living in a defined geographical area much like the Church in Corinth, or Church in Galatia in the New Testament times. Such seems to be the meaning and spirit of the definition of the fundamental role of the presbyter or deacon or bishop in the CSI Constitution as well as in the liturgy of the Book of Common Worship. Thus ministry in the CSI not only of the presbyter but also of the deacon and the bishop is meant to be essentially Pastoral Ministry.

It is apparent such an understanding of the ministry in the Church is well in keeping with the tradition of the Scriptures of the Bible. Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament we can find a consistent and insistent image of God as Shepherd and the Believers in God as the sheep of His flock. (Read Psalm 23 and John 10.) There is the depiction of God as the Perfect Shepherd and God's only begotten son as the Good Shepherd and are apparently meant to be paradigmatic model and pattern for all other shepherds (pastors) called and commissioned by God, Christ or the Church which is the Body of Christ, all for the one central purpose of taking care of the flock of God. This, for instance, is made abundantly clear by the call and commissioning of Apostle Peter by the Risen Lord Christ to do the work of the pastor as the Good Shepherd. (Read, John 21:14-18. Read also Bishop

\* Paper presented at the CSI Golden Jubilee All Presbyters Convention, Bishop Cotton Boys School, Bangalore 15th May 1997.



Newbegin's book, 'The Good Shepherd'). In this passage, the Risen Lord, it would appear, first wanted to test if Peter truly loves the Master and Lord, apparently, as the basic qualification to be commissioned by the Lord to tend the lambs and feed the sheep of His flock, which is the pastoral ministry. It is not without significance that the early church accepted Apostle Peter as the Chief Shepherd and the Leader of the Apostolic Church (Acts 2). More significant too is the fact that down through 20 centuries the Apostle Peter is remembered and venerated as the 'Pastor Pastorem' (Pastor of Pastors) and that most dramatically by the successive Popes of the Roman Catholic Church claiming to be the successors of Apostle Peter as the Chief Shepherd of the Church. Even this one single fact demonstrated and confirmed the essential nature of Christian ministry as being the Pastoral Ministry. But the best justification for this understanding comes from the parable of the Last Judgement (Matt. 25) where the criterion for Final Judgement of all believers in Christ, the Coming King is nothing other than the engagement in pastoral ministry with clear self-understanding and self-identity as the sheep (and goats) of the flock of God.

## II. Search for Authentic Pastoral Ministry in the C.S.I.

The primacy of the role as Pastor of any CSI Presbyter and indeed, deacon or bishop is clearly implied and well established both in the CSI Constitution as well as from the Scriptures of the Bible. However, it can be fairly said and humbly confessed that this remained by and large an ideal on paper, leaving very much to be desired in practice, as is the case with most of the basic teachings of Christ and the church. In fact, there is no historic church nor denomination church nor

charismatic church nor United church nor even the Catholic church where it can be claimed there is perfect understanding or form or functioning of ministry in the Christian Church. This is not to say that we may hide behind the reality and not strive towards recovering the meaning, nature and functioning of the pastoral Ministry. And thanks be to God, there has been such a striving in our great Church of South India, right from the start 50 years ago and it is an on-going process with periodical initiatives to recover and enrich the role of the pastoral ministry in our Church. At once, we can recall certain major initiatives taken by certain dioceses and in the 4 different States of South India in the course of 50 years of our history. Thus the famous book of Wilfred Sclopes, L.M.S. Missionary in Rayalaseema on Lay Voluntary Workers triggered several dioceses to open up Lay Training Programmes to enrol the Voluntary Church Workers to assist the presbyters in their expanding pastoral ministry. Bishop Newbegin of Madurai-Ramnad diocese, wrote booklets on 'Pastors paid and unpaid' which subsequently led to the acceptance of Hon. Deacons and Hon. Presbyters by the Synod and introduced in several dioceses in the 1950's. And then, in the next decade, R.D. Paul's report of evaluation of our Church titled 'Renewal and Advance' also made several recommendations to introduce new forms of Church Workers which were geared to strengthen the pastoral ministry. So did also the Abel Committee Report called 'CSI after 30 years'. But it is during the 4th decade under the leadership of the then Deputy Moderator, Bishop Solomon Doraiswamy, formation of the Pastoral Aid Department in the Synod took a clear shape besides certain other new initiatives like Diaconal Ministry following the 1981 International

Partnership Consultation on Priorities for the Mission of the Church. This was produced as a document under the same title in 1982. In the decade of 1980's several other initiatives were taken like the three major Councils for Healing Ministry, for Education Ministry and for Development Ministry. This was the period when the well known VELCOM programme was also introduced with a special Department in the Synod (Vision for Equipping the Local Congregation for Mission) had become a widespread effort in training the local church members to be voluntary witnesses in terms of their specific talents and abilities they can make available for the Ministry and Mission of the Church. Ordination of Women approved in the Synod of 1982 and other forms of Ministries by Women Workers including the traditional Bible Women were also part of the silent but strong process of enriching the pastoral ministry in the whole Church of South India.

## III. Problems and concerns of the ministry in the C.S.I.

In the course of the past 50 years, our growing church necessarily had to face several problems and meet with many challenging concerns. However, only major ones may be referred to here, particularly those related to the evolution of the pastoral ministry in this Church.

1. Simultaneous with the Church Union Movement in South India there was also the process of evolution from Mission to Church. Particularly, this was a shift of both the ministry and management of the Church from overseas Missionary hands to Indian Ministers of the Church. Thus the expatriate District Minister in the Presbyterian or London Missionary Church or Reformed Congregationalists Church or the Circuit Pastor of



the Methodist Church or the Deanery Chairman of the Anglican Church was giving way to the local Presbyter or the Bishop as in the case of the C.S.I. uniting all those denominations. The implications of such shifting changes for the role of the Minister are obvious and they presented their own problems. (Read the book titled, 'From Mission to Church' by Bishop N.C. Sarjent, C.L.S. Madras).

2. The rapidly changing political and social contexts as well as the religious ferment in the decades before Independence had thrown up several issues and challenges for the Ministry in the Church in South India. For instance, the struggle for Independence from the so called christian colonial masters had indirectly resulted in certain hostility and intolerance on the part of the majority Hindus towards tiny minority Christian church. Further, the dream and the dawn of freedom from foreign rulers and their dominant culture resulted in self-assertive patriotism and religious pride even branded christianity as a foreign religion. All this created problems for the role of the christian minister. (Read the book titled, 'The Christian Minister' by C.W. Ransan, N.C.C. Nagpur).

3. The happy coincidence that both the Indian Democratic Nation as well as the United Church of South India were born in the same year of 1947, had opened up certain expectations and promises of Democratic Freedom both in the society and in the church. The democratic idea of 'One Vote, One Value' reflected the Christian belief in the worth and dignity of every individual and this rightly infused hope and desire to participate in the life of the people both in the church and in the Society. Specifically, within the church people were now ready

at last, (as it were) to believe in the priesthood of all believers. This of course would raise questions as to relationship between the Church's Ministry as the Ministry of the whole people of God over against the Ministry of the specially ordained and appointed threefold Institutional Ministry of the Church. Over emphasis on the threefold Ministry seems to have resulted in certain clericalism which at the same time called for all due recognition for the laity of the Church who are the forgotten people. (See the book under the title, 'Forgotten People', C.L.S., Madras). This kind of unhappy divide which was also unintended between Clergy and the Laity presented problems for the role of the Minister.

4. A new fact of Church Life particularly after the Independence is the emergence of Independent Churches and Sectarian Groups especially under the banner of Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity, mostly imported from the Western Churches within the past 5 or 6 decades. This gave rise to the phenomenon of mushrooming of Bible Schools and Seminaries which offered to all 'Born Again' and minimum dedicated christians, theological education. These Institutions claimed to be interdenominational, inviting candidates for training to be pastors and evangelists with inducements of free scholarships etc. It is estimated there are over 500 such Bible Schools and Seminaries all over India annually turning out 5000 trained christian ministers. At least a section of whom would seek employment as some kind of Church Workers in the mainline Churches. The sheer numbers and influx of such a cadre of workers would certainly throw up problems for the role of ministers in the church.

5. Another aspect of increasing number of ministers both trained and untrained being made available from outside the mainline institutional churches is the fact of dichotomy between the charismatic ministers even if self-appointed servants of God and pastors on the one hand and those who are called from the local congregations selected, trained and ordained ministers in the institutional churches. There is thus a clear cut divide and also tension between these two sets of ministers making their own separate claims and complexes about inner spirituality. However, the problems become more acute for the ministers of the institutional church like our own CSI because unlike in the case of the charismatic and even voluntary ministers, their salaries and housing and future are well secured for them. The implications and consequences of such a situation certainly throw up more problems particularly in the area of loyalty, membership of the congregation who are free to choose their own pastors as well as patterns and forms of worship.

6. Then there has been of course inherent and inevitable an increasing gap between profession and practice at all levels in the life of the Church. Not to speak of the inherent tension between the reality and nature of the Church as a divine institution as well as a human society. After all, as St. Paul says church is like the earthen vessel into which heavenly treasures are received from God.

7. Yet another reality in the church is the ever widening gap between the different cadres of full time church ministers and ordinary worshipping members of the church. This is most apparent in the areas of educational standards, economic disparities and in the resulting social stratifications. So much so the clergy and other church workers



tend to become a class of their own, indeed an exclusive caste group in the midst of the legitimated hierarchical structure of society in India. The implications of this situation for the role and function of the Christian minister in the Indian Context cannot but be critical and a matter of deep concern.

From the foregoing outline of the emerging problems and concerns of the ministry in the church during the past 50 years, it is but natural that there were parallel attempts to overcome these problems and difficulties faced by the forms and functions of Christian ministry in the Church of South India. (Read the book, 'The Pioneer Ministry' by A.T. Hanson, SPCK 1961 and Dr. John Webster's book on 'Pastor to Dalits, ISPCK 1995, And also read 'Patterns of Ministry' edited by Bishop Solomon Doraisamy 1981.)

#### IV Towards Renewal of the Pastoral Ministry

During the course of the past 50 years, several efforts and attempts were undertaken in different parts of our Church to overcome the problems and issues raised by the Indian context as outlined in the previous section for the renewal of the Pastoral ministry. However, in the process, many areas of conflicts and irritations had to be confronted for removing and resolving specific hurdles and obstacles in the development of the pastoral ministry. Five such major irritants that tended to militate against the emerging of robust and a renewed pastoral ministry may be identified here. They are related to the question of (a) Episcopacy (b) Elections in the Church (c) Equitable sharing of church resources (d) Exercise of power and authority in the government of the Church and (e) Equipping the laity for the ministry and

mission of the Church. To elucidate and explain each of these areas will take an extended essay and so will be beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is not difficult to see how each of the above areas becomes problematic and critical for the development of the pastoral ministry. Even the simple fact that there were several books or articles came to be written by several different thinking leaders of the church and scores of seminars and consultations were organised both at the Synod and the diocesan levels from time to time on topics and concerns raised relating to the above areas are evidence for our church's efforts to overcome the negative influence of these irritants in the renewal of the pastoral ministry. Thus I would refer to books such as that of Theology of Laity by D.A. Thangasamy, R.D. Paul's several books such as 'Chosen Vessels' pointing to exemplary leaders of the Church and 'Ecumenism in Action' raising critical questions on the nature and functioning of the threefold ministry etc., which are written by leading laymen of our Church. Notable seminars and consultations include those such as under the title. 'Servants of the Servant Lord', 'Social Justice and Mission of the Church' etc. besides the recent experiments with VELCOM Programmes (Vision for Equipping the Local Congregation for Mission) in different dioceses and local congregational level. These are just a few examples for both Micro and Macro level efforts towards the Renewal of the pastoral Ministry.

#### Conclusion:

From the above outline of the contours and cutting edges of the 50 years history of the Church of South India, one may gain the

impression that there were more attempts to change the structures of ministry and less to recover the spiritual content of the ministry. But recently, some of the diocesan congregations have a new vision based on Scriptural Texts like Rom. 7:6 'We minister not according to the old written code but according to the New Spirit'. Here, we have examples of searching for New Spirituality that will lead to the renewal of the pastoral ministry. However, such turning to the work of the Holy Spirit was evident also in the 1960's when booklets were written on the subject of Holy Spirit by our former Bishops like Bishop Newbigin, Bishop Jesudasan and others by organising Seminars and Bible Studies on the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit to be disseminated in the local congregations in the four language regions of our great Church. As a matter of fact the re-publication in the 1990's of the famous books of Ronald Allen an English Missionary in China at the start of this century were of great inspiration for world-wide study of the topic of, 'The work of the Holy Spirit'. His books on the Mission of the Church derived from the New Testament Scriptures are summarised in a book titled 'The Compulsion of the Spirit'. Interestingly the central theme of his writing contained in the book called 'The Reform of the Ministry' and the main thrust of his message is that the Reform of the ministers be it bishop or presbyter or deacon as 'The called and commissioned Servants of God', both laity and clergy must precede the reforms of the structures of the ministry. My own motto and simple spiritual exercise towards renewal of my pastoral ministry are, *Daily repentance* in the heart and mind, *Daily dependence* on God the Holy Spirit, *Daily abundance* of living by sharing with all those I am called to serve. ■



# SOUTH INDIA CHURCHMAN

*The Church seeks to proclaim the Gospel and disseminate church-related news through the print apostolate. Through the magazine it publishes it keeps you abreast of what your church does, what goes on in it, in which direction it is moving, what your church's leaders think on various issues facing the church reflecting on its Faith and Order, Life, Work and Witness. Please support your church's endeavour! Subscribe to South India Churchman.*

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## Indian Christian Dance Video Released



June 24. It was an evening to remember, for, on that day a golden chapter was written in the history of the South Indian Christian Church when a video cassette featuring a dance recital depicting the Gospel by a dozen or so young girls was released by the Rt. Rev. Dr. M. Azariah, Bishop in Madras, Church of South India.

The Master of ceremonies, Mr. N.R.D. Ezekiel, Co-ordinator *Christu Dance Centre*, said the video was chosen as it was a colourful and easy

fulness of joy David expressed thanks to God by dancing", he said.

The Bishop after releasing the first copy of the cassette said that the title of the video 'Wonder of Wonders' was apt as the Lord whom we celebrate in the cassette is a wonder - working, miracle-making God. Dance is spontaneous and *Bharatanatyam* was an art form respected and admired by all people around the globe. He gave away mementos to the main participants of the video presentation.

to absorb visual medium. Mr. Robert Gurusamy who spoke felt that there was a common misconception among Indians that dance was not Christian. "What about King David? Out of the

The dance presentation begins with *Alarippu*. The other integral parts of *Bharatanatyam* - *Jateeswaram*, *Saptham*, *Varnam*, *Tillana* and *Padams* all find a place here. They help depict the deeds and miracles of the Lord Jesus, His birth, death and resurrection, his gift of salvation to mankind. The last two items are in the folk tradition - the Kurathi folk dance in *Bharatanatyam* style delineating Sastriar's 'Bethlehem Kuravanji' and Kolattam, a traditional folk dance belonging to Tamil Nadu, wherein the dancers rejoice over the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The programme's finale is 'Mangalam' the traditional blessing.

Mrs. Meenakshi Dhinakaran has choreographed the dances. Ms. Ezekiel has arranged the music. Ms. Anjala Richard conceived of and executed the project. Copies of the video tape can be had from:

Mr. Ezekiel  
Balar Kalvi Nilayam Avenue  
Chennai - 600 007.  
Tel. : 532 3969

Letters from the readers are welcome covering all aspects of Faith and order, Life, Work and Witness of the church and also their reflections and opinions on what appears in these pages. They must be precise, clear, brief and preferably type-written. They may be edited for reasons of space, clarity and brevity.

— Ed.

*A certain parish had a very tedious, pious, and self-centered pastor for a couple of years.*

*Then came the day when he was transferred to another parish.*

*He announced this by saying, "Brethren, the same Lord who sent me to you is now calling me away."*

*There was a moment's silence and suddenly the congregation rose at once and began to sing,*

*"What a friend we have in Jesus."*

### WHAT IS ON ?

Pastors and Laity Conference on Spiritual Renewal and Missional Advance, July 20-22, 1997 at COLT, MADURAI

★ ★ ★ ★

Workshop on Suffering, Loss and Church's Ministry particularly in the context of Addiction,

Alcoholism and AIDS. Christian Medical College, Vellore.

★ ★ ★ ★

Andhra Regional Institute on Evangelisation Aug 5-9, 1997, Cathedral Compound, Dornakal.

★ ★ ★ ★

Post-Jubilee Nation and Church: Church's Role in Nation Rebuilding, Aug 14-16, UTC, Bangalore

★ ★ ★ ★

Golden Jubilee Children's Festival, Chennai, Sept. 6-7, 1997

★ ★ ★ ★



# SUNADA SAMVATHSARAM: JUBILEE\*

BISHOP VICTOR PREMSAGAR

## Introduction

The blowing of the trumpets ushered in the Jubilee year.<sup>1</sup> It announced liberation through out the land (Lev. 25:10). It was a time of great joy, festivity and jubilation. As the Church of South India celebrates the jubilee of the inauguration of the united church, it proclaims to the whole world, unity of all churches and ultimately all people, and the whole universe. The Telugu Bible translates Jubilee as *Sunada Samvathsaram* (the year of sweet music), understanding the sound of the trumpets as the sweet music of liberty to all. Definite acts of liberation are envisioned, so that justice and righteousness may prevail, and social injustice and systemic oppression be rooted out. The jubilee year should recapture something of the excitement and expectation of September 27, 1947. Excited because we, as a pilgrim church, have journeyed these fifty years and expectation as we look to the future, the next millennium. In Luke 4:16-20 Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:1-2 and 58:8, in Nazareth, on the Sabbath day, and refers to "the preaching of the Good News to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed" and the acceptable year of the Lord.

## I. Formation of the Church of South India

Michael Hollis our first Moderator says:

\*An address given at the CSI Bishops' Retreat in Bangalore from April 17 to 18, 1997.

1. Jubilee — '*Jobel*' means a ram. This word is often associated with *qeren* 'horn', a wind instrument played to inaugurate the Jubilee year.

"The formation of the CSI was indeed a release from the bondage of the past - not that history ceases to matter, but that it ceases to dominate"<sup>2</sup>.

The experience of the negotiations was one of bold liberating affirmation of the Gospel of Christ and the commitment of the Indian churches to fulfil the high priestly prayer of Jesus for his disciples, in the upper room.

I would like to draw attention to some leaders and a few highlights of the discussions in the Joint Committee from March 1926 to June 1947<sup>3</sup>.

The negotiations were parallel to the freedom struggle that was taking place in our country and had greatly inspired the Indian church to break the western divisions in the church, and unite as one church in South India. It was an expression of the freedom of the spirit, that led the churches to explore within the Indian religious and cultural ethos, unity for which our Lord had prayed for his disciples and those who believe in him, through them. (Jn. 17:20-24)

1) Bishop Edwin James Palmer of Bombay was an outstanding theologian and one who vigorously battled for the formation of the United Church. He made three propositions:

2. Michael Hollis, *The Significance of South India*, London: Lutterworth Press, Ecumenical studies in History Series, No. 3, 1966, p.8. Bishop Michael Hollis was the first Moderator of the CSI.

3. Twenty Sessions in all - Bengt Sundkler, *Church of South India: The Movement Towards Union, 1900-1947*, London: Lutterworth Press, 1954, p. 425.

(a) The Church union should be according to the plan which is already in God's mind.

(b) Union is dying, just as Christ died and rose again. Any church that takes part in union will die but die for a resurrection. God will give it a resurrection in the new life of the united church. It is a self-reducing process.

(c) Dispensation rule with exception to the rule. The church is built on a definite rule, but there are exceptions to the rule. "The purpose of dispensation is to counteract the inherent weakness of the law which is its general nature. The church has the duty of enforcing the laws, but it also has the duty of dispensing them in those rare cases where enforcement of a particular law would not rightly represent the wisdom or the equity or the mercy of God." Palmer suggested that the rule about Apostolic Ministry of Succession and the priestly function of the ministry should be dispensed, to provide space for the prophetic and preaching ministry found in the Bible. By this Palmer was making room and enunciating a theological principle for accepting the non-episcopally ordained ministry, as having equal validity<sup>4</sup>.

2) Inter-communion was another liberating step taken by the members of the Joint Committee and the negotiating churches. Dr. J.J. Banninga of Pasumalai wrote to Bishop Vedanayakam Samuel Azariah of Dornakal on 29.9.1930 challenging him on inter-communion. He wrote,

4. Ibid, pp. 117-118.



"Let one of you bishops attend a non-Anglican communion Service as a communicant and the whole atmosphere in South India will change, but I am afraid you will not dare to do it<sup>5</sup>."

Of course Azariah dared. He felt that he could meet this challenge in terms of the recent Lambeth conference 1930, which had resolved not to question the action of any bishop, who would use his dispensing power and sanction an exception to the general rule in special areas.

Archbishop Temple endorsed Azariah's interpretation and said that this would make clear that the churches cared more about the spirit than the forms. The Episcopal Synod Feb. 1932 indicated the possibility of inter communion on three grounds:

Experience by experiment, exception through dispensation and expectation through the progress of the Joint Committee, as anticipation of the union.

The Metropolitan affirmed the attitude of the Synod in these words.

"We fear lest we by rigidity might be found to be fighting against God."

Bishop Azariah and others wrote that only Pentecostal experience will make intercommunion possible. Inter communion through anticipation was related to the Pledge. The pledge assuring that union is a reality in the near future. Banning raised the issue of experiment, as in science, to prove or otherwise of an issue, not without participation. At the Joint Committee meeting Feb. 13- 18, 1932 in Madras, Anglican

members including two Bishops - Waller and Azariah participated in communion, celebrated by the Methodist Ministers - the Chairman and the Secretary. This broke the ice and assured the Methodists and the SIUC members, of the commitment of the Anglicans to Union.

3) The acceptance of the ministries of the non-episcopal churches as ordained by God and therefore accepted by the Uniting Church without unification of ministers, is another liberating mark of the CSI. The laying on of hands by nine ministers of CSI, three from each tradition on the first new bishops, along with the three Anglican bishops, affirms the parity of the non-episcopally ordained ministers. The 1930 Lambeth Conference though it disliked, the participation of the presbyters was prepared to tolerate with the explanation that it should be fully explained that the presbyters did not take part as consecrators<sup>6</sup>.

Michael Hollis makes the following comment about the deliberations among the Uniting Churches:

There was full consultation with church leaders and scholars both in India and outside. But the negotiations and the leaders in the Indian churches concerned were never overawed by western theologians and ecclesiastics. They paid attention to what was said, but exercised their own judgement and came to their own conclusion<sup>7</sup>.

To a question raised in Nigeria, what has CSI gained Moderator Sumithra answered:

6. Ibid, 219 and 250.

7. *The Significance of South India*, op. cit. pp. 7-8

"Is it right to do a profit and loss account, when it is a question of trying to be obedient to the Lord's will? We have tried to be obedient. We have lost some friends and supporters. We have lost some financial support. We believe we did right and we are happy. But our gains by far outweigh our losses - gain or loss, we have the joy of being obedient to the Lord<sup>8</sup>."

## II. Unity and Mission

Unity for Mission was the vision with which the CSI set out in 1947. It refused to be identified as yet another denomination in the world church, but saw itself as a movement of union - a pilgrim church, never satisfied with the *status-quo*, but ever moving forward into new areas of obedience in unity and mission. I remember Moderator Ananda Rao Samuel, emphasising forcefully, that union and Mission are the two sides of the same coin. Unity should lead to Mission.

The Jubilee year is the time to look back and see whether the initial boldness, courage and liberative actions have continued or whether we have settled down with time, becoming yet another ecclesiastical structure with grandeur and triumph, but static, narrow, preoccupied with selfish interests, not forging all available resources, human and material, for mission.

## 2. Jubilee

The Jubilee is a scriptural concept associated with the social, economic, political, religious and theological undertones. It is the year immediately following the

8. Article in *Theology*, August 1965, p. 378. Quoted by Michael Hollis, op. cit. p. 78.



seventh sabbath year - The sabbath is set in the creation story itself, when God is said to have rested from all his works. The decalogue has the fourth commandment, as keeping the sabbath holy. The Leviticus passage also speaks of making the Jubilee year holy.

As our nation celebrates this year as the Jubilee of independence, it is rejoicing for the liberation from the colonial rule. The Jubilee passages in Leviticus 25 relate to justice issues:

Cheating to be stopped, the distribution of land in relation to the poor, strangers and guests. Every seventh year is also associated with remission of debts (Deut. 15:1-2). Liberation of slaves and distribution of wealth gained through unjust means and oppressive socio-economic and political....

Zachaeus is willing to make amends. He vows to give half his possessions to the poor and give four times to those whom he had defaulted. He was not merely being kind, but he is engaged in justice. During the Jubilee year, at least once in a life-time (a generation), one has the opportunity to make amends, to show compassion and work for an equitable, and just society.

The United Church set itself up as a poor church, pastoring the poor and proclaiming the Good News to the poor. The bishops are to be the leaders in evangelism and shepherds of the flock. The saffron stole and the bands in bishop's robes, take up the Indian symbol of renunciation and poverty. Their consecration was followed by installation and not the enthronement as in the Anglican church. The emblem of the CSI with the burning bush

reminds us of God's call to Moses to liberate the suffering people from the bondage in Egypt. The liberation motive is woven into the symbol. The cross and the circle pointing to the fullness of life offered by Jesus to all. The concern for the parity of ministries has been sufficiently discussed, but the question of authority has not been faced by the church. We only tend to look at the constitution, and forget the implications of consecration.

3) Recent critical studies of the Bible from sociological, new literacy and canonical points of view, in addition to the earlier historical criticism, raise new contextual questions about reading of the scriptures and their interpretation.

4) An Indian method of scriptural interpretation.

In India, Roman Catholic scholars Anand Amaladoss and others have a new method of scriptural interpretation based on *Dhvani* they draw attention to Anandavardham (9th century) who in his monograph on *Dhvanyaloka* explores a *dhvani* interpretation of the scriptures. Anandavardham takes note of four meaning of the text explained by *Sanskrit* discussion on poetry and scriptural texts.

1. *Abhidha*—Primary or expressed meaning of a text based on the dictionary meaning of the words.
2. *Laksana*—Secondary meaning, when primary meaning is not adequate.
3. *Anumana*—meaning by inference.
4. *Tatparya*—The sole import of a sentence.

According to Anandavardhana the above four do not exhaust the

meaning of poetic or scriptural text. They are inadequate to interpret a text. It is evoked, hinted at meaning, echoing and resounding in the reader/hearer.

*Dhvani* gives the suggested meaning within the parameters of the text, but something hinted at suggested, surreptitiously hidden (*Vyangya*). Amaladoss says it is not hermeneutics, explaining what is in the text but hermeneutics—esoteric. It calls for a response from the reader, hearer, leading to a transformation. Anandavardhana indicates that there are various kinds of *dhvani*—*Bahya* (extrinsic) *vastu dhvani* and *alamkara dhvani* which can also be expressed. There is an *antharya*, intrinsic or *rasa dhvani* which can never be expressed, but only suggested or evoked.

The expressed meaning is fixed in a context, but the suggested meaning can vary from person to person depending on his/her background. Anandavardhana illustrates this from the words *gato stamarkah* the sun has set.

It would suggest to a lover, time for a rendezvous, to a soldier "time to attack the enemy", and to a religious person time to begin evening worship. *Sringara* to a lover, *bheebhatsa* to a soldier, *Karuna* to a priest. Rasas, the appropriate juices are secreted in the body, in response to *dhvani*. Anandavardhana applies this to the epic *Mahabharatha* and indicates that the prominent *rasa* that is suggested or echoed in this epic is *Karuna rasa*.<sup>9</sup> The *rasa* evoked in the Jubilee text is *Karuna rasa*.

9. A. Amaladoss, 'Dhvani Theory of Sanskrit Poetics,' *Bible Bhashyam*, December 1979, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 261-275. The whole number is on *Dhvani* as a method of scriptural interpretation.



At this Retreat for the bishops, we may ask, what does it suggest to the bishops and the Moderators in the CSI?

In the examination section of the Consecration Service the Moderator says,

Will you for Christ's sake, be gentle and merciful to the poor and needy-(*Karuna rasa*), Seek always unity and peace (*Santa rasa*).

*Karuna* and *Santa Rasa* are uppermost in the whole Bible. The value held up is the Kingdom and the Gospel. *Dhvani* makes scripture relevant for all time and for all contexts. The fundamentalists want to affirm the efficacy of the scripture, but based upon the expressed meaning. Reading through the passage of the Jubilee (Lev. 25) *Sunada Samvathsaram*, the *Dhvani* calls response from readers, by making amends, engaging in liberation and reconciliation. The episcopal bench as that of the shepherds, evokes a response to this *Dhvani* in the Jubilee passage.

I would like to suggest a few implications of the *Dhvani* interpretation of the Jubilee year.

- 1) The Church and its leadership is evoked by the *Karuna Rasa* and *Santa Rasa*. Justice and righteousness adorn the way in which we respond to the scripture.
- 2) It calls for a transformation in the style of life and the way in which the affairs of the CSI are conducted; our life itself is the best witness to the Gospel of Jesus. The Church as the servant of the servant Lord, should be filled with love and compassion.
- 3) The resources of the Church be focused on strengthening of the poor and the marginalised.
- 4) The suggested *Dhvani* is reflected in the words of Jesus to the Disciples 'not so among you' in the story of washing the feet and interview with James and John. Others use authority and power to harass people and lord it over them. But it should not be so among you.

## Conclusion

The humbling of Jesus and his glorification—(Phil. 2:5-8)

Being in the form of God,  
thought it not robbery to be equal with God,

made himself of no reputation.

took upon him the form of servant,

and was made in the likeness of man.

He humbled himself

and was obedient unto death.

'Wherefore' —on account of this, the *Dhvani* in this passage is that there is no danger in giving the crucified Lord, the name of above every name. The humbling of Jesus is not for glorification. But because he was humble, it was found that there would be no danger in giving him the name above every name.

It is this kind of humility and humbling of leadership and the whole church, that is demanded in the Jubilee year, releasing new power for reconciliation and renewal. ■

After a distinguished service as Editor of the South India Churchman for several years Rev. Dass Babu is now the National Coordinator for Timothy Project. Rev. Dr. Surya Prakash held the fort with distinction during the transition until the present editor took over. The South India Churchman records its appreciation of the services rendered by them. On behalf of the readers we thank them for their labour of love.

— Ed.

"Tell me one good reason why a man should get married."

"Because after marriage he wouldn't have to blame everything on the government."



# 'Gospel and Culture can not be separated' – Rev. Dyvasirvadam

## An Interview with the Director, Pastoral Aid Department

*The Golden Jubilee All Pastors Convention of the Church of South India was organised by the Pastoral Aid Department of the CSI Synod. Even to organise a small event successfully a lot of planning, resource mobilisation, scouting and running-around are required. To organise a mammoth event like this involving nearly 2,000 pastors spread over 20 Dioceses (barring Jaffna Diocese which could not be represented for various reasons) of the CSI requires a lot of commitment, hectic advance planning, long tarrying at the feet of the Lord not to speak of the tension and anxiety which inevitably go with such things. The South India Churchman therefore decided to interview the Director of PAD, Rev. Daivasirvatham to get a first-hand information of what went on behind this kingdom event. Interestingly our reporter caught him on the outer corridor of the Cathedral of the Epiphany at Dornakal soon after the consecration of Bishop A. Rajaratnam (see page 20). Here are some excerpts of the interview.*

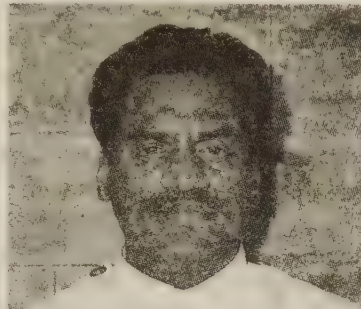
**Could you kindly narrate the background leading to this event?**

When I read the history of the CSI for an article on its history for the Jubilee Souvenir I realised there was no occasion when all pastors were brought together. I thought this was the right occasion to let it happen so that they could all stay together for fellowship, interact, play, have fun and reflect on their common calling and destiny.

*There is no spirituality without politics. Politics is history of human beings. Without speaking about history of human beings you cannot talk about spirituality.*

**Was this objective achieved?**

Yes, partially though. This being the first attempt there were



short-comings such as lack of time, imperfect planning etc. But

### Face to Face

by and large the dream was realized and it was a great memorable family get-together.

Some said it was a mega event, some called it historic, some hailed it as a kingdom event. What is your view?

It was a historic event because nothing like this had happened before! It was an experience of the foretaste of the kingdom where pastors belonging to various languages, cultures, age group, educational background, traditions, generations and experience all came together experiencing God moving in their midst in this Jubilee Convention. Therefore it is also appropriate to call it a kingdom event.

**How did you choose the main speaker of the convention?**

Three times I took the pastors to Israel on study tour. Then I had an opportunity to listen

to Bishop Samir Kafity at St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem. It occurred to me then he was a gifted speaker who could be invited. When I presented this proposal to the synod ministerial committee he was found to be acceptable to all. Some local revival speakers were also suggested. But he had the charisma, his messages had emotional and spiritual appeal and theological depth. He belonged to the family of those who stood before St. Peter on the day of Pentecost! He has 2000 years of christian tradition behind him.

God was moving us to bring pastors together in a trail-blazing event. This unique event deserved a unique preacher.

**Was not his pastoral message, especially on the second day, tinged with political overtones?**

There is no spirituality without politics. Politics is history of human beings. Without speaking about history of human beings you cannot talk about spirituality. Can you talk about Gospel without its historical/cultural frame work? As a photo needs a frame to define it, a house a compound wall, to understand the gospel you need the Palestinian culture. His message was relevant. It was a challenge to us also to present the gospel in formats relevant to our culture.

**Coming to physical aspects, what would you say of the arrangements made for the convention?**

Simply superb. It was a total success. I'm grateful to Bishop Vasanthakumar, my good friend and his team who did an excellent job of it.



**Do you have any plan to have this kind of convention again?**

As we enter the third millennium we should meet again eliminating all the short-comings. God should give us vision, strengthen us to meet together to recognise the will of God to bring people together. This convention coincided with the week of Pentecost! It was not an accident. The delegates felt the spirit moving in their midst.

**The delegates were happy with the mementos given to them. What do you have to say about it ?**

Pastoral Aid Department supplied the cassock bag and the

Bible study booklet on the theme of the jubilee. The imaginative jubilee stole was the gift of Bishop Azariah of the Diocese of Madras. The carry-bag was given by the Karnataka Central Diocese.

**Who met the expenses of the convention?**

Karnataka Central Diocese contributed Rs. 8 lakhs and infrastructure. Pastoral Aid Department Rs. 2-3 lakhs.

**Do you think it was worth spending?**

Yes, it was worth spending for such a unique event. Pastors would have attended different

meetings under different umbrellas. This was a unique event of unity when all could come together for witness and praise.

**Who would you attribute the success to ?**

It was a team work. Bishop Sam Amirtham set the tone of the convention in his eloquent key-note address. Dr. Surya Prakash and the Directors of the Synod encouraged me and supported me. The cooperation extended by the pastors was tremendous and I am thankful to all our Bishops and the officers of the Synod for the sincere encouragement they gave me.

**Thank you.** ■

## Milestones

### Honoured

Dr. Mani Jacob has been nominated 'INTERNATIONAL MAN OF THE YEAR 1996-97' in recognition of his services to education. This honour has been accorded to him by the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge, England.

Dr. Mani Jacob is the General Secretary of the All India Association for Christian Higher Educational and also the Secretary General of ACCU-IEF (Associations of Christian Colleges and Universities: International Ecumenical Forum).

### Instituted

The Council of Serampore College has set up a prize in memory of the late The Rt. Rev. Dr. Sabapathy Kulandran, the first Bishop of the Jaffna Diocese of the C.S.I. (1947-1970). The prize is to be awarded annually for the best M.Th. (Master of Theology) Student in the subject of Missiology. An Endowment Fund of Indian Rs. 25,000 has been donated to Serampore College for this purpose by a friend of the late Bishop.

### Appointed

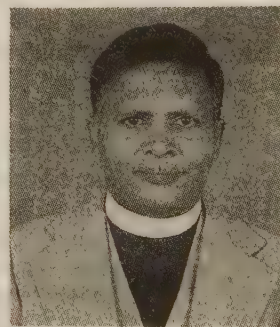


Rev. B.D. PRASADA RAO has taken charge as Director of Christian Education Department. He has a Masters in Sociology from Sri Venkateswara University and a Masters in Theology specialising in Christian Education at expand, Bangalore. A gold Medalist from Serampore University (Master's prize) he also has rich pastoral experience having been ordained in the year 1979 in the Rayalaseema Diocese. While serving as Pastor at Madanapalle, he initiated innovative evangelisation strategies through his brainchild ICUC (Integrated Christian Utility Centre).

His wife Lily Elizabeth is a Social Worker handling a community

based project in Rayalaseema Diocese. They have two daughters and a son aged 14, 11 and 5.

### Appointed



Rev. C.V. THEODORE, jack of many trades, was an Assistant Professor of English, Radio Programme Officer, Editor of Journals, Director, Associate Pastor of St. George's Cathedral, Madras and till recently Pastor of St. John's, HVF, Avadi. He has a novel and two plays to his credit and has also produced a dance-drama on the Nativity theme. He was trained by the BBC Staff in London in Radio/Slide/TV production. His wife Pramila is a Biology Teacher in a private school in Chennai. Their only daughter, now married, is a practising physio-therapist.





Bishop Sam Amirtham and his team leading the delegates  
on the theme song sung at the CSI All Pastors Convention, Bangalore

### THEME SONG

*Chorus: Ha Ha Ha Halleluia! (7 times)*  
*Ha Ha Amen.*

1. Praise God, for the fifty golden years;  
Blow horn and shout liberation  
United let's join in the celebration.  
Bless the Father, the Son and the Spirit.
2. We're committed to gather together  
That we all may be one in God  
In fellowship closer and fuller life promised,  
Bless the Father, the Son and the Spirit.
3. We offer ourselves in surrender.  
Lord, show us your vision in thunder,  
We'll work for your kingdom of justice and mercy,  
Bless the Father, the Son and the Spirit.
4. Help us Lord to tend your creation,  
As stewards appointed by You.  
Your 'shalom' turns swords into peace-loving  
ploughshares,  
Bless the Father, the Son and the Spirit.

—Bishop Sam Amirtham

### NEWS IN BRIEF

The Christian and Muslim communities will coordinate and collaborate in the educational development of the members of the minority communities at the national, regional and local levels on a planned basis. This decision was made at a conference of the representatives of Christian and Muslim communities in Delhi held in New Delhi on 5th February, 1997. The theme of the Conference was 'Educational Development of the Minorities - Towards Coordination and Cooperation'. The Conference began with the reading of the message of Cardinal Francis Arinze, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Dr. Mani Jacob, General Secretary of the All India Association for Christian Higher

Education appealed to the participants to search for positive and concrete action plans to work together for promoting the general, technical and professional education of the minority communities. Some of the recommendations made by the conference are:

1. Christian educational agencies are requested to start schools in places where Muslim population is high. Land and other facilities will be provided by the latter for this purpose.
2. Christian schools and colleges are requested to give special and favourable consideration to Muslim boys and girls in admissions.

3. AIACHE and other agencies are

requested to facilitate participation of Muslim college and school teachers in staff development programmes.

4. Steps may be taken to defend the educational rights of minorities jointly.
5. Minority educational institutions should strive to uphold and propagate the secular and democratic values of the nation.
6. Ongoing dialogue may be organised between representatives of the two communities at the national, regional and local levels.
7. A Conference of the leaders and the religious heads of the two communities may be organised to discuss possibilities of cooperation and coordination in the field of education.



# CSI Golden Jubilee Pastors Convention, May 1997



1. The Most Reverend Moderator The Rt. Rev. Dr. Vasant P. Dandin delivering the inaugural address.



2. The Deputy Moderator The Rt. Rev. William Moses speaking to the distinguished gathering of pastors.



3. His Grace the Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem The Rt. Rev. Dr. Samir Kafity speaking.



4. The distinguished galaxy of church leaders on the stage. (From Left to Right) Mr. Frederick William, the Synod Treasurer, The Rt. Rev. Sam Amirtham, Bishop of South Kerala Diocese, The Archbishop Samir Kafity, The Most Rev. Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Vasant P. Dandin, The Rt. Rev. William Moses, Deputy Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Paulraj, Bishop of Trichy-Thanjavur Diocese, The Rt. Rev. Kuruvilla, Bishop of North Kerala Diocese, The Rt. Rev. M. Kesari, Bishop of Kanyakumari Diocese and the Rt. Rev. Fredrick, Bishop of Rayalaseema Diocese.



# Connection of the Bishop of Dornakal



A section of the gathering.



Pastors at Tea-break.



Pastors at Lunch



His Grace the Archbishop of Jerusalem The Rt. Rev. Samir Kafity and the Most Reverend Moderator the Rt. Rev. Dr. Vasant P. Dandin having a chat.



## Consecration of the Bishop of Dornakal May 1997



The Cathedral of the Epiphany, designed and constructed by the Late The Rt. Rev. V.S. Azariah of Dornakal, where the consecration service was held.



The choir leading the Bishop-designate Rev. A. Rajaratnam in procession to the Cathedral.



The Most Reverend Moderator The Rt. Rev. Dr. Vasant P. Dandin, examining the Bishop designate Rev. A. Rajaratnam.



The newly consecrated Bishop The Rt. Rev. A. Rajaratnam, Biscopina and their daughter Mary Gnana Vatsala Krupavaram having fellowship meal soon after the consecration service.



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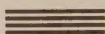
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